

THE WHITE DEVIL.

A Startling Story of Military Life in Arizona.

One night in June, ten years ago, the sentinel pacing up and down before the gates of Fort Defiance, up in the northeastern part of Arizona, suddenly heard the hoof-beat of a horse.

"Halt! Who comes there?" rang out the challenge, but there was no answer.

It was a starlight night. Two or three hundred feet away the sentinel caught sight of a white horse approaching him at a brisk walk. When he could see the horse he could also see that it had no rider. Drove of wild horses and still wilder mustangs were frequently seen from the fort, and the sentinel was rather pleased that one of them was being led by curiosity to approach the gate.

The horse grew whiter and larger as he came nearer, and when he halted he was not over ten feet from the guard. He was tall and powerfully built, mane hanging almost to his knees, and tail sweeping the ground, and he was as white as snow. Head up, ears pointed forward, and eyes opened to their widest extent, the wild horse stood for a long minute, and looked into the soldier's face. His nostrils dilated, his tail moved this way and that, and the muscles in his powerful chest and legs stood out in bold relief. The soldier's surprise and admiration were so great that he stood like a statue, musket on his shoulder, and his mind almost doubting what his eyes saw.

Suddenly, and without an instant's warning, the horse sprang forward to the attack. Catching the sentinel by the shoulder with his teeth, he raised him clear off the ground, and shook him right and left, as if he was an empty grain bag, and then hurled him against the heavy gate with terrible force. The yell of pain and alarm uttered by the sentinel had scarcely died away before the relief came hurrying out. They found him lying in a heap beside the stockade, unconscious, and his uniform in tatters. There was no enemy in sight—not even a wolf skulked away through the darkness. A general alarm was sounded, the drums beat to arms, and for a quarter of an hour the excitement was intense, every one believing that a large force of Indians was on the point of making an assault.

When the sentinel recovered his senses and related his adventure, no one would believe his story until a sergeant had examined the earth and discovered the hoof-prints of the horse. It was, however, such a singular adventure that no one felt easy until morning came. Then the trail of the white horse could be followed far out on the prairie; and soon after sunrise the horse himself was discovered bearing down on the fort from the direction of the mountain range, three miles away. As the word went round, every man turned out to catch sight of the animal about which so much had been said. He came forward at a sweeping trot, head up, tail streaming far behind, and his knee-action as perfect as if he had been trained on the course for years. He swerved neither to the right nor the left, and never halted until he was within pistol shot of the crowd at the stockade.

The sentinel had not exaggerated in his statements. The color was snow-white, and such strength and symmetry no one had ever before seen in a horse. The ears were pointed, the eyes as bright as stars, and the sun glistened on his hide as if it had been varnished. For two or three minutes not a word was spoken by any man, and the horse did not move a foot. Then a scout and hunter, who had come into the fort about half an hour before, said to the commander:

"Why, that is the boss known among us and the Indians as White Devil. I've seen him four or five times, and I've heard of him at least once a week for the last five years. He's the ugliest, slyest, and most treacherous beast standing on four legs."

The scout related that the horse before them came to his notice five years before, when the Indians made several attempts to capture him. He was singled out from the drove, and pursued for several days, and in despair of securing him, one of the red men sought to kill him, so that no one else should secure the prize. The horse was only wounded by the bullet that was meant to take his life. He at once separated himself from the drove, and followed his former pursuers like a shadow. He dashed into their camps at night, attacked their ponies, when he found them grazing, and had on several occasions attacked lone Indians, and quickly killed or disabled them.

"I'll give \$200 to the man who captures that horse for me," said the commander, as he noted every fine point about the majestic animal.

"You might just as well offer ten thousand," replied the scout. "That 'ere horse can pace, trot, and gallop, and there isn't a wolf in the hull Sierra range which can smell of his heels. I'd as quick take the job of cleanin' out all the reds in Arizona as of catchin' the White Devil. See that fore foot go up! See them ears lay back! He'll charge the hull crowd in less'n a minute!"

Before a word of warning could be spoken, the horse made a dash upon the men, screaming out as a troop horse

does when badly wounded in battle. The soldiers rushed for the gate. One of the hindmost was a private named O'Meary, scarcely up to the regulation height, and run down by sickness until his weight did not exceed a hundred pounds. The White Devil seized him by the back, lifted him off his feet by a toss, and when the soldiers next looked, O'Meary was being borne away with the swiftness of the wind. The horse had a firm grip of clothing and flesh, and keeping his head well up, he swept over the prairie with the soldier held almost perpendicularly before him. He was out of range before anybody could pick up a gun. There was a dozen or fifteen horses at the post, and in five minutes as many men had mounted them, and were galloping away in pursuit.

White Devil and his victim had disappeared over a swell about a mile from the fort. As the horsemen reached the swell, they found the dead body of their companion on the grass, bitten and stamped and kneaded to a bloody mass. The horse stood facing them, forty rods away, as if he had waited for them to come up. As the remains were being conveyed to the fort, several hunters came in, and in a short time a force of twenty mounted men left the gates to try and effect the capture of the vicious animal. The men had lassos, hobbles, and ropes, and the instructions were to drive the horse from the neighborhood if he could not be captured. He stood on the ridge, and looked down upon the band as it left the fort. The four lasso-throwers rode directly at him, while the rest of the men separated and rode to cut off retreat by way of the mountains.

When the first horseman was within one hundred feet White Devil, who had been standing like a block of stone, threw up his head and started off at a sharp trot. Ten rods beyond the first ridge was a second, with a little green valley between. Ridges and valleys ran straight away to the west for twenty miles, and as the horse headed that way, one of the hunters said:

"The beast is in for a long race. He will go down to the end of this valley, turn to the left, and before noon he will be back here, returning on the fort side of this first ridge. Three of us will push him along as fast as we can to the end of the valley. The rest of you drop out in squads here and there and race him as he comes back. Let three or four men halt right here to give him a last push."

The wild horse courted pursuit. Half a mile away he was racing up and down, throwing his heels into the air, snorting and pawing the sod in his impatience to be off. With a hoop and a yell three lasso-throwers started in pursuit. They were almost near enough for a throw when the horse headed away at a trot. They could not gain an inch, though they had three of the best mustangs in the Territory, and the animals were pushed to the top of their speed. Head up, mane rolling back over his shoulders like a wave of foam, and his massive tail streaming out like a flag, the White Devil lifted his feet and put them down as steadily as clock-work. While they were doing their best, they could see that he was not using all his power. They kept up a continual yelling for the first five miles, hoping to break his pace, but neither shouts nor the reports of rifles lost him a step.

In seventy minutes the White Devil was at the end of valley, fresh as a daisy, while the mustangs, half a mile behind, were reeking and blown. He waited for them to come up, and then turned to the left, struck a pace, and swept away at such a gait that he was soon out of sight. Ten miles to the east was the first squad of men. They sighted him a mile away, and were all ready for pursuit. Coming straight ahead, with the grass almost sinking under his feet, the wild charger passed them not more than a hundred feet away. He laid back his ears at their yell, but went straight ahead at his thundering pace. In ten minutes the men could hardly see him, a second and a third squad were treated in the same manner, and as the last one was reached White Devil changed his pace to a gallop, threw up his heels, and headed for the range. He was soon out of sight, and the chase was abandoned.

At daylight next morning the strange horse looked down from the ridge again, and by and by walked down to within pistol shot of the fort. A band of sixty friendly Indians, out on a hunt, had halted at the fort the night previous, and they were anxious to organize a new chase. More than eighty well armed pursuers were ready soon after breakfast. Some rode out to cut off the retreat to the range, and others galloped down the valley. An hour after they were out of sight the main body made a dash for the horse, which had been grazing for the last half hour. He took to the valleys as before, and men dropped out at every mile to push him as he returned.

White Devil was pushed faster than before, but he would neither break his trot nor let a horseman get within a hundred feet of him. The Indians who had gone on ahead were expecting him to turn to the left as before, but the wild horse kept straight ahead as he reached the mouth of the valley. He ran out on the prairie for twenty miles, firing out every horse in pursuit, and then wheeled and returned over his route of the previous day. Men were waiting for him, but he scarcely appeared before he was out sight. He was pacing and trotting by turns, and

not until he reached the end of that eighty-mile chase did he break into a run. When near the fort he crossed the ridge, shook off the last pursuer, and entered a dark canon in the mountains. The Indians traced him until the canon split in three or four rocky defiles, and then they camped down with the determination to wait till hunger and thirst should drive the fugitive out. Darkness came, midnight came, and the watchers had heard nothing.

With the soft tread of a wolf, almost, a foe stole upon the Indians sleeping under the walls of the fort. Step! step! step! and a white object stood within ten feet of the first sleeper, and peered this way and that. It was White Devil! The red men were still waiting in the dark canon, but the horse had emerged from the range by some defile known and used before.

The sentinel at the gate heard a shrill neigh, saw the smouldering brand of the dying camp-fire flung in the air and the next moment the Indians were yelling and screaming in affright. Back and forth charged the horse, striking, kicking, and uttering wild neighs, and he did not disappear till the roll of the drum called the soldiers to arms.

The Indians had suffered such damages that they were determined to kill the strange tormentor as soon as daylight came, though his life had heretofore been held sacred. He was heard racing up and down while night lasted, and when morning broke he was in plain sight. The Indian heart almost relented at sight of the strong limbs, milk-white coat, and silver eyes, but White Devil dared them to the attack by prancing up and down and flinging his heels about.

Separating into squads of ten, the red men rode out on the prairie. White Devil stood still, ears flat to his head, lip down, and one fore foot raised a little. When three of the squad were within pistol shot they halted, and thirty rifles covered the brave, lone horse. While they were thus held he gathered his feet like a cat and dashed at the nearest horseman. A roar of rifles and a volley of bullets stopped him. Struck by a score of balls, he halted, reared up, and died without a groan. The Indians gathered around, but they did not exult. As they stroked his glossy neck and sides, they said to one another:

"He was brave! We will paint his picture on our war shields, and the body shall be buried from the wolves!"

A professor was expositing with a student for his idleness, when the latter said, "It's of no use: I was cut out for a loafer." "Well," declared the professor, surveying the student critically, "whoever cut you out understood his business."

The Georgia negro has no more faith in banks. He lays all his money out in clothes and hair oil, and the news of a bank suspension causes him to exclaim, "Bust away wid ye, but you can't hurt dese lavender breeches!"

Queen Victoria celebrated Hallowe'en at Balmoral with quaint, old-fashioned ceremonies. A brilliant procession of torchbearers marched through the grounds in the still, dark night, preceded by the Queen's pipers playing lustily. After them came the Princess of Wales and her little daughters, and the Princess Beatrice, each carrying a flaming torch aloft. After marching around the castle several times the Princesses Alexandra and Beatrice lighted with their torches the huge bonfire erected on the Green, and, with the rest of the gay company, danced the torch-light dance round the blazing pile, while the kindly Queen looked on.

HOUSEHOLD FAIRIES.—"How many thumbs?" smilingly asks the sitting-room carpet, looking up at its colleague, the battered stove pipe. With a wink at its disjointed elbow, the stove pipe, riveting its gaze on its friend, replies, "Only three, but I've raked enough skin off the other knuckles to make a pair of boots." Chucklingly responded the carpet, "Not so well as you did last year. I got a couple of finger nails, two whole trousers' knees, started a good crop of hang nails on every finger in the house, and think I have a divorce suit pending." "That's a pretty good spread," replies the pipe, and then, turning to an exhausted tack-hammer that was resting itself on the window-sill, asked, "How is your score?" "Oh, don't ask me," gasped the tack-hammer. "I've been busier than a master's gavel on a chapter night. I haven't missed but one knuckle since I started in, and then I caught the ball of a thumb, plumb center, and raised a blood-blister as big as a walnut." And then the graceless trio smiled in silent chorus, and an old rheumatic mop that was standing on the porch listening to the conversation through the keyhole, bumped itself against the door in an ecstasy of delight, and fell fainting across the wheelbarrow with one leg, that was waiting on the walk for somebody to come along and fall over it.—*Burlington Hawk-Eye.*